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ABSTRACT

The organizational and human productivity knowledge-base expansion of the past 5 years indicates that educational leaders and support staff must assume responsibility for schooling together to change student achievement patterns. The sociological management challenge is one of empowering groups to address educational productivity. The administrative challenge is one of instructional leadership and restructuring through the integration of teachers into the decisionmaking process of the schools. To measure the existing training needs for principals and district personnel, a needs assessment instrument was developed that examined seven specific categories, including the Principalship, Problem Solving, and Long Range Planning. The instruments were administered to 263 elementary, middle, and secondary school principals and central office personnel in three Texas school districts. The results indicate that principals want training in the elements of annual schoolwide, team-level, and individual teacher planning, coaching, and evaluation. In addition, they want skills for designing successful staff development programs, providing on-the-job teacher coaching, monitoring performance and program development, implementation, and evaluation. The message is clear: if principals are expected to accomplish different kinds of performance results from those for which they were trained, their development in knowledge and skills must become a district priority. (57 references) (KM)

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MANAGING PRODUCTIVE SCHOOLS

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Abstract

In managing productive schools, education can learn valuable lessons from studying the success stories of America's best run corporations. The expanding research-literature base on productive industries, social agencies and effective schools identifies exemplary production patterns found in dynamic work cultures. These findings have profound implications for school-based management.

MANAGING PRODUCTIVE SCHOOLS

By William L. Johnson and Karolyn J. Snyder

The management writings that have made the best-seller lists in recent years (Deal and Kennedy, 1982; Geneen, 1984; Moss-Kanter, 1983; Peters and Waterman, 1982), the generic base of management and organizational theory and research, and the studies of effective schools have all pointed to the critical role of the school principal and the principal's potential ability to alter work and achievement patterns. Accordingly, the vital function of school-based management is being examined by departments of education, professional organizations, school districts and principals themselves.

Even though the research literature corresponds with our intuitions about good schools and effective leadership (Purkey and Smith, 1985), error potential resides in merely exhorting principals to focus on school-based management and go forth and lead. In fact, most principals today are simply not prepared to meet the school's need for instructional leadership.

In effective schools administrators not only manage, they exercise instructional leadership. Management implies school maintenance; leadership means keeping sight of long-term goals and guiding the school in that direction (Rallis & Highsmith, 1986).

Before 1950 principals focused primarily on being instructional leaders. However, in post-World War II America, as schools grew larger and more complex, administrators' emphasis swung toward personnel, budget and public relations (Goodlad, 1979).

This view of the educational administrator as the "corporate" chief executive officer has been modified by at least three recent trends (Bryant, 1988). One trend looks to restructure the schools, calling for teachers to be integrated into the decision-making process of the schools. Examples include building-level participatory decision making and the utilization of lead teachers.

A second trend deals with leadership styles and studies in gender difference (Statham, 1988). A third focus conceptualizes the school administrator as an instructional leader (McLaughlin, 1984). Such a view requires that the administrator attend to the instructional-learning process in addition to the management function.

Numerous studies in recent years confirm that strong instructional leaders are critical factors in effective schools. For example, a Rand study of 1977 called the principal the "gatekeeper" of change and reported that principals were powerful enough to prevent and foster any kind of change within their schools. Additionally, Edmonds (1979) and Austin (1979) concluded from their studies that instructional leadership was indeed a key to an effective school.

But how is a principal's behavior steered in the direction of instructional leadership? Outlining conceptual or methodological guidelines for accomplishing instructional leadership is especially difficult since little consensus exists among school administrators who discuss these tasks. Moreover, how do these tasks differ from what principals have always done? Current research now shows that school-improvement planning, staff-and-program development, school assessment and an understanding of culture constitute important elements in productive schools.

The purpose of our paper is threefold. First we will synthesize the results of effective schooling characteristics and leadership tasks that have been identified by the research community and use this as a focus to present a production model for instructional leadership. Second, considering this empirical base of over 250 research studies of productive organizations (75%) and effective schools (25%), we discuss the development of a research instrument which we designed for school districts to use in assessing the training needs of their administrators in relation to instructional leadership. Third we studied the administrators in three large school districts in the State of Texas. Our pool of respondents (n=263) for the study were elementary, middle and secondary school principals and central office personnel.

RESEARCH ON EFFECTIVE SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

School Improvement Planning

Principals and teachers in effective schools transform their common concerns into specific achievement-oriented, school-improvement goals. This team effort spawns a healthy school climate and tends to create a sense of community. Purpose and order for schooling activities result from collaborative goal definitions (Armor, 1976; Brookover & Lezotte, 1979; Edmonds, 1979; Glenn, 1981; Lieberman & Miller, 1979).

Administrators of effective schools learn to creatively group teachers into working teams. When principals and teachers work as colleagues, collaborative action planning, shared decision making and cooperation result. Moreover, an interchange of ideas among

teachers occurs regularly and permeates school life (Austin, 1979; Doss & Holley, 1982; Lieberman & Miller, 1979; Vallina, 1978).

Both school and teacher goals tend to guide teacher performance in successful schools. Role expectations are clear and teachers are held accountable for student performance in effective schools (California DPE, 1980; Lieberman & Miller, 1979; Phi Delta Kappa, 1980). Representative organization planning activities would include school-wide goal planning, work group performance planning and individual staff development performance planning.

Program Development

Principals of effective schools successfully convey their system of instructional standards to teachers, as well as coordinate school-wide curriculum, instruction, and testing. These principals plan for, organize, and distribute resources to their staffs. Resource management is linked with school goals. District resources enhance the instructional program (Edmonds, 1979; Glenn & McLean, 1981; Madden, 1976).

The instructional program is adaptable and consistent in general, characterized by clear and timely instructional cues, reinforcements, correctives and feedback, and by active student participation. Teachers plan and carry out programs together, providing a climate of high achievement expectations for all students (Coulson, 1977; Edmonds, 1979; Klausemeier, 1982; Levine & Stark, 1981; Lysakowski & Walbert, 1982; Marcus, MacQueen, Duck, Lee, & Wellisch, 1976).

Further, parents and community businessmen contribute significantly to the successful school's instructional program. High levels of parent or community involvement expedite student achievement, a greater awareness of community issues, and tend to result in increased satisfaction between the school and parents (Armor, 1976; Austin, 1979; Hobson, 1976; Reagan, 1977; Vallina, 1978). Representative program development activities would include instructional program development and resources development.

Staff Development

Principals of successful schools frequently coach teachers (formally and informally) in developing instructional skills. "Effective teaching" guides supervision practices as principals and teachers improve teaching, and subsequently raise the levels of student achievement (Clausett & Gaynor, 1982; Edmonds, 1982; Levine & Stark, 1981).

School-based staff development programs tied to improvement goals mark the most effective programs. In successful schools, staff development is an essential variable to improvement efforts. Teachers and principals together identify skills that are transferable to the classroom (Glenn & McLean, 1981; Levine & Stark, 1981; Lieberman & Miller, 1979; Miller & Wolf, 1978; Vanesky & Winfield, 1979).

The staff at successful schools is held accountable for its results, individually and collectively, in a supportive atmosphere (Cohen, 1981; Levine & Stark, 1981; Lieberman & Miller, 1979).

Staff development goals closely follow school goals. Workshops, planned by the staff, and subsequent teacher coaching comprise much of the development program.

Instructional standards that help direct improvement and which are flexible and directed to mechanisms that foster the achievement of school goals provide the keys to the development of the school's program. The community, including parents, is involved in definable ways in the instructional program.

The most important issue for school reformers is to address how to provide the high-quality staff development that is necessary to produce effective schools (Orlich, 1989). From their review of school effectiveness studies in 35 states, Bancroft and Lezotte stated that improvement efforts should be focused on a single school. Furthermore, establishing a building-based improvement team composed of teachers and administrators accelerates school improvement efforts, short-term implementation plans are not successful, since the implementation of school improvements takes from three to five years (Bancroft & Lezotte, 1985). Representative activities from this component include staff development, clinical supervision, work group development and quality control.

School Assessment

In successful schools, principals develop a school-wide accountability model. Student achievement gains, work group productivity, and staff behavior and performance measure school-wide productivity. Effective schools recognize their students' accomplishments (Brookover & Lezotte, 1979; Edmonds, 1982).

Team-level assessment practices that correlate with achievement have not been identified. Possibly, few assessment practices exist at the team level and therefore cannot

be studied. The effect that team-level evaluation might have on team productivity, student achievement, and on overall school success may be a question worth pursuing.

Principals of successful schools review staff. High teacher morale is the chief teacher characteristic in assessing teaching in effective schools (Brookover & Lezotte, 1979; Coulson, 1977).

Personnel in effective schools continually evaluate student progress, and the greater the involvement of assessment by the principal the higher is student achievement. Feedback on progress is useful when standards exist for achievement and where principals have high expectations. Student academic self-concept and self-reliance tend to be high in effective schools (Brookover & Lezotte, 1979; Clausett & Gaynor, 1982; Gigleotti & Brookover, 1975; Vallina, 1978). Interestingly, researchers report little about teacher evaluation systems which correlate to any extent with student achievement gains or with organizational success, with one exception: goal-based performance evaluation.

Representative activities from this component includes assessing student, teacher, work group, and school achievement.

Organizational Culture

The best sellers on modern management now focus on making groups more productive and on empowering them to tackle problems and challenges consistently and persistently. The concept of "corporate transformation" (Kilmann, Saxton, & Serpa, 1985) has emerged to describe this current phenomenon.

From the emerging work-culture literature (Moss-Kanter, 1983) we know that culture is so powerful a force that it can either stimulate or repress performance. That is, the strength of an organization's goals and symbol systems; the quality of group sharing and networking; the patterns of reward and recognition: empowerment and entrepreneurial opportunities to shape the organization's future function as a context (work culture) that nurtures success. Indeed, every organization develops its own personality or culture: a complex mix of implicit and explicit group values, attitudes, behaviors, rituals, standards, perceptions, and history. This work culture seems to be the social and psychological force that stimulates the direction and quality of work in an organization. This powerful, intangible force functions as a context to limit or enhance the capacity of an organization to respond to issues (Carlopio, 1988; Selman & DiBianca, 1983). The work place can be revitalized by stimulating and managing its culture.

When Managing Productive Schools: Toward an Ecology (Snyder & Anderson, 1986) was published, the authors held certain views on school management. We believed, and still believe, that faculty involvement in the educational improvement process is a management necessity. However, the expansion of the knowledge base about organizational and human productivity over the past five years indicates that until educational leaders and support staff together assume responsibility for schooling, achievement patterns are likely to remain unchanged. The sociological management challenge is one of empowering groups to address educational productivity. The administrative challenge is one of instructional leadership and restructuring (integrating teachers into the decision-making process of the schools). This synthesis emerges from the

developing work-culture literature (Carlopio, 1988; Moss-Kanter, 1983; Kilmann, Saxton, & Serpa, 1985; Levinson, 1968; Selman & DiBianca, 1983) and the instructional leadership findings mentioned previously.

Indeed, the literature on all kinds of productive organizations continues to affirm clearly and strongly that employee involvement in shaping the organization's direction is essential to the very survival of the organization. Opportunity, information and resources are the vital materials that fuel organizational productivity (Johnson and Snyder, 1989-1990).

A typical management structure might divide the school year into three parts: planning (September and October), development (November through April), and evaluation (May and June).

METHODOLOGY

Once the literature was assessed, [considering an empirical base of over 250 research studies of productive organizations (75%) and effective schools (25%) (Snyder & Anderson, 1986; Snyder (1988)], we sought to measure the existing training needs for principals and district personnel vis a vis the model. Consequently, a needs assessment instrument was developed.

The number of school personnel surveyed in the pilot testing of the instrument was determined by having at least five times as many respondents as try out questions on the instrument (Lemke & Wiersma, 1976: Nunnally, 1970). We conducted a survey of 442

school administrators in eight districts of Arizona, Kansas, Missouri, North Carolina and Texas.

The construction and administration of the instrument involved the following steps: development of a pool of instrument questions, development of questionnaire forms, selection of administrative personnel to respond to the instrument, actual administration of the instrument and development of computer programs for reliability and validity assessments of the instrument.

Pertaining to the selection and development of instrument forms, Tittle and Hill (1967) investigated the predictive efficiency of four frequently used attitude measurement techniques in terms of predicting indices of voter behavior. The Thurston, Guttman, Likert and semantic differential scales were compared. The Likert scale was superior to all other scales in predictive validity. Their evidence suggested that in cases where the Likert and Thurston scales were of equal length, the Likert scale exhibited higher reliability.

Consequently, the authors designed a one column quasi-Likert response format for the instrument. The educational leaders were asked to select a range of six levels of need: "1" indicated no desire for training: "6" indicated a desire for assistance with school implementation. The six points on the instrument reflected a skill-training range. The following definitions were used to guide the participants' responses:

1. **no training** (skill unrelated, therefore no need exists for training)
2. **no training** (competency high, therefore no need exists for training)
3. **training: awareness level** (training desired at a beginning level)

4. **training: initial practice** (have some skill/knowledge: desire guided practice)
5. **training: skill refinement** (have some skill and knowledge: desire help with implementation)
6. **assistance with school implementation** (have skill and knowledge: desire help with implementation)

Seven specified categories were examined: The principalship, the school as a system, problem solving, staff development, long range planning, planning for school growth and personal awareness.

The principalship category consisted of questions expressing concerns for school leadership, planning, organizing, motivating staff and controlling school activities. The next category, the school as a system, addressed questions about environmental factors, such as federal, state, community, parental, and district pressures, and factors that are internal to the staff such as students, programs, achievement levels and staff competency.

The problem-solving category addresses techniques and processes that can be used in solving real school problems in a collaborative mode. The fourth category, planning for school growth focused on the principal's personal school planning tasks and included organizational analysis and action planning dimensions. Fifth, staff development questioned needs relating to in-service training, clinical supervision, performance planning and evaluation for staff members. Sixth, long-range planning included questions about procedures for schoolwide goal setting, team level action planning, and monitoring and evaluation of school goal success. Finally, a personal awareness category addressed

personal interests about personality characteristics, self-concept and administrative style effectiveness and their affect upon job performance. The questions from all seven categories were then randomly assigned to the survey instrument.

INSTRUMENT ANALYSIS

The collected pool of data was submitted to factor and subscale analysis. Instrument validity was established by two methods. First, content validity involves essentially the systematic examination of the scale content to determine whether it covers a representative sample of the domain to be measured (Anastasi, 1976; Ebel, 1956; Huddleston, 1956; Lennon 1956). Representative selection of items and sensible test construction are cited by Nunnally (1967) as the standard means of ensuring content validity. The content validity of the instrument was established therefore in the following manner: each subscale area was reviewed and questions were written which were believed to be representative of the behaviors, attitudes or characteristics to be measured. Seventy-six questions comprising seven subscales were written.

Next, construct validity was established. The construct validity of a test is the extent to which the test may be said to measure a theoretical construct or trait (Anastasi, 1976). Essential to the notion of construct validity is the internal consistency of the items (Nunnally, 1967). Of particular relevance to construct validity is factor analysis. Lemke and Wiersma (1976) have stated that factor analysis is a refined technique for analyzing the interrelationships of behavior data, simplifying the description of data by reducing the number of necessary variables or dimensions (Anastasi, 1976: Kim & Mueller, 1978).

The principal components method of factor analysis was selected as the most appropriate factor analytic methodology sense the study investigated the total varation of the scale items without regard to whter the variance was common or unique. Scale items were retained in the instrument only if they had a factor loading greater than or equal to 0.40. The rule often used in this context is to consider factor loading less than 0.30 as not substantial (Gorsuch, 1983; Kim and Mueller, 1978).

In the initial principal components analysis, 13 factors were extracted using as the criterion eigenvalues greater than 1.0 as the cutoff for extraction of factors. The 76 X 13 factor matrix was next rotated in an attempt to reduce the number of factors. Both oblique and varimax rotations were performed. The factor structures were then reviews by the authors.

The authors concluded that, as the number of factors to be rotated was reduced from 13 to 7, the 50 X 7 varimax rotated factor was the more logical. The original 76 questions were hypothesized to be contained in seven subscales. Seven subscales were confirmed in the varimax rotated factor matrix.

Fifty items were retained in the instrument following the elimination of 26 items suggested as inappropriate by the factor analysis. These 50 items grouped into seven meaningful components: problem solving (five questions); personal awareness (six questions); staff development (five questions); planning (19 questions); goal setting (six questions); the school as a system (five questions); and the principalship (five questions).

Evaluation of the reliability of the instrument was accomplished through use of the Kuder-Richardson generalized reliability formula, coefficient alpha (Cronbach, 1951; Ebel,

1965; Novick & Lewis, 1967). This formula was appropriate since a Likert scaling format was employed in the instrument form.

The Cronbach alphas for these subscales follow: creative problem solving (.82), personal awareness (.86), staff development (.82), planning (.94), the school as a system (.76), the principalship (.82), and goal setting (.82). Anastasi (1976) has posited that it is desirable for reliability coefficients to fall in the range of .80 or .90.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Given the problems of conducting administrative research in school districts, we contacted the district administrators in three large school systems in the State of Texas, where we were working in a variety of training and consulting capacities. The elementary, middle and secondary school principals and central office personnel who responded to our study reported that they desired training in all categories, with the desires ranging between awareness (category 3) and initial practice (category 4). Table 1 outlines the specific training preferences for all the administrators surveyed. New knowledge and skills in all categories are perceived as important to the administrators' role success. A response range of 1 (low) to 6 (high) was possible.

The principalship emerged as the area of greatest interest and concern. Last in rank was the school as a system which was the category describing the school's ecology and the many organizational factors which work interdependently to influence achievement results. While all seven categories are distinct from each other, each seemed to represent and be of concern to principals in providing effective instructional leadership.

We can report that those studied perceive that the task dimensions surveyed are a desirable focus for their own professional development. Furthermore, the skills necessary for successful collaboration, organizational assessment and analysis, and a knowledge of how personal characteristics influence leadership all appear to be important to the administrators for the successful implementation of instructional leadership tasks.

Each school district and professional organization needs to devote priority attention to these needs in particular, augmenting workshops on what teachers can do. Furthermore, peer supervision and coaching, and peer efforts to develop and implement new skills in the classroom benefit the school system. A feedback mechanism of some sort is essential to the eventual successful development of expertise in instructional leadership.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Educational administration is changing from an emphasis on just administering policy to a focus on leading instructional improvement efforts. Principals want the skills necessary to become successful instructional leaders.

Our study of principals reinforces our observations: because of a redefinition of the principalship, principals themselves are faced with a need for new job knowledge and skills. Further, principals want training in the elements of annual school-wide, team-level and individual teacher planning, coaching, and evaluation. In addition, they want skills for designing successful staff development programs, providing on-the-job teacher coaching, monitoring performance and program development, implementation, and evaluation.

Moreover, in addition to the tasks of instructional leadership, principals also want to know how to involve others successfully in cooperative planning and action.

The message for role development is clear: if principals are expected to perform new tasks and accomplish different kinds of performance results from that for which they were trained, their development in a new set of knowledge and skills must become a district priority. Moreover, our own experiences cause us not only to report those findings of what principals say they want but also to challenge school administrators to foster skill development by combining initial training in instructional leadership tasks with continuous on-the-job peer and supervisory coaching. If we expect principals to help transform our schools, we owe it to them to provide the necessary knowledge, skills, and support for their success.

Table 1
Ranking (High to Low) of the Need Indices for the Instructional Leadership Surveys
(All Educational Leaders n = 263)

Rank	Area	Need Index
1	**The Principalship** (questions relating to instructional leadership expectations)	3.808
2	**Problem Solving** (questions relating cooperative decision-making)	3.761
3	**Staff Development** (questions relating to clinical supervision, training and teacher evaluation)	3.728
4	**Planning for School Growth** (questions relating to organizational analysis and school leadership planning)	3.700
5	**Personal Awareness** (questions relating to the leader's self-concept, personality, leadership style and their influence on instructional leadership behaviors)	3.691
6	**Long Range Planning** (questions relating to cooperative goal setting and action planning, monitoring and evaluation)	3.568
7	**School as a System** (questions relating to school goals, organization, performance, program,technology and management, how together these guide the school improvement process)	3.521

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